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Letter dated 20 December 2016 from the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2016, as endorsed by the members of the Working Group.

I would be grateful if the present letter and the report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ismael Abraão Gaspar **Martins**
Chair
Ad Hoc Working Group
on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

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Report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2016

I. Introduction

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa is a subsidiary organ of the Security Council, established pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 31 January 2002 (S/PRST/2002/2), in which the Council recognized the need for adequate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa and indicated its intention to consider the establishment of an ad hoc working group to monitor the recommendations contained in the statement and to enhance coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

2. The present report of the Working Group covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016. The Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations, Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, was appointed Chair of the Working Group for a second one-year period ending 31 December 2016. The representative of Senegal served as Vice-Chair throughout the reporting period.

II. Activities of the Working Group in 2016

3. On 13 April 2016, the Working Group met to consider its activities for 2016 as proposed by the Chair and, following discussion, agreed to the proposed programme of work. Also on 13 April, the Working Group began consideration of how it could assist the Security Council in preparing for the tenth annual joint consultative meeting of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which would be hosted by the Security Council on the afternoon of 23 May 2016. An informal meeting of the two Councils was convened at the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations on the morning of 23 May. On 11 May, the Working Group held, at the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations, a further exchange of views on the format, agendas and expected outcomes of the informal meeting and the tenth annual joint consultative meeting. It was agreed that the Chair of the Working Group would prepare an annotated agenda to facilitate further consultations among the members.

4. On 1 November 2016, the Working Group considered the topic "Improving the cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council for sustaining peace in Africa" and heard briefings by the Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Olof Skoog (Sweden); the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Téte António; and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco. The members of the Peacebuilding Commission were also invited to attend the meeting.

5. The discussion allowed members of the Working Group to explore topics such as the relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in situations of transition from a peacekeeping mission; the relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission, the African Union and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union; and financial support to African Union-led activities and peace support operations.

III. Conclusions

6. During his tenure, the Chair placed significant emphasis on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as an essential part of the United Nations framework for the prevention of conflicts in Africa, and on the participation of the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations in order to promote joint analysis and sharing of experiences between the United Nations and the African Union.

7. The Working Group continues to play an essential role in preparing the annual joint consultative meetings of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and should continue to facilitate the preparation of such meetings and follow up on the communiqués agreed upon by the two bodies.

8. The Working Group has served as a platform for fruitful exchanges on cooperation with the African Union on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and is encouraged to continue to engage representatives and entities involved in peacebuilding issues and activities concerning Africa. Such interaction might be particularly relevant following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on 27 April 2016.

9. In accordance with provisions of resolution 2282 (2016), in which the Security Council expresses its intention to regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific, strategic and targeted advice of the Peacebuilding Commission, and based on his two years of chairing experience, the Chair recommends that the annual programme of work of the Ad Hoc Working Group include topics relating to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. He further recommends that the incoming Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group consult with relevant Secretariat entities and Member States before proposing the topics to be considered.

10. The Chair would like to express his personal gratitude and that of the delegation of Angola to the members of the Working Group for their collaboration and the support extended to him in the discharge of his mandate. The appreciation of the Chair is also extended to the Member States, organizations and individuals who greatly enriched the discussions of the Group.

11. Finally, the Chair thanks the Secretariat for its assistance in fulfilling the mandate of the Working Group and wishes his successor all the best in continuing the important work carried out by the Working Group.